

Moral Libertarian Perspective: Power, Oppression and Liberation

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Political philosophers throughout history have pondered questions of power, oppression, and how to liberate people from oppression. In recent years, such topics have also entered mainstream consciousness in an unprecedented way. There's one thing everyone can agree on: wherever there is power, there is great potential for oppression. And as Foucault and many other philosophers have noted, power and power dynamics are to be found everywhere in life. Therefore, oppression is potentially everywhere. However, just how to liberate people from oppression is still one thing that we cannot find consensus on yet.

I believe the moral libertarian principle of equal moral agency should be central to any sincere attempt to liberate everyone from oppression. Under the principle of equal moral agency, nobody can have power over anybody, and hence there is no oppression. In other words, as long as we strive to achieve the principle of equal moral agency, we will be heading in the right direction to liberate everyone from oppression.

It is also therefore, the more we care about liberating everyone from oppression, the more we must oppose everything that runs contrary to the principle of equal moral agency. To this end, we must oppose all government policy deciding top-down for everyone that certain citizens shall be second class and afforded less rights, for example laws against the religious freedom of certain religious groups, or laws against the equal rights of LGBT individuals. We must also oppose structures that allow some people to control what others can say (or even preventing them from speaking up in the first place), like so-called safe speech and the so-called progressive stack. For those who believe in true liberation from oppression, there should be no excuses for refusing to uphold the principle of equal moral agency.

Some conservatives may argue that certain 'traditional' policies are needed to uphold tradition, or to stop what they consider to be the left's 'long march through the institutions'. However, they clearly have too little faith in the free will and moral compass of the many individuals that exist in every society. Would they just sit there and allow a 'long march through the institutions' to occur? In fact, if somebody wanted to initiate such a 'long march', they would most likely start with the government, and then use government power to forcibly change every other institution. Weakening the ability of governments to define societies certainly prevents this approach.

On the other hand, some progressives argue that we need to give certain groups priority to speak up, and remove the ability of other groups to have a voice, to achieve equality. This view not only doesn't respect individuals as individuals rather than just members of groups, this view is also deeply misguided from a power and liberation perspective. Because such arbitrary systems by definition

require policing by certain individuals, they effectively help create a power differential, and hence great potential for oppression. Some may think that this temporary inequality will help end oppression, but this idea has never worked in history. Rather, it just changes the oppressors to people who happen to identify as 'progressives'.

In conclusion, sticking to the principle of equal moral agency is the only way we can head in the right direction to end all power dynamics and oppression. Anything else is simply 'some are more equal than others', and will inevitably create dynamics of power and oppression.